

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 8 have been amended. Claims 1-20 are currently pending. Claims 1, 8 and 17-20 are the currently pending independent claims.

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8-10, 13-15, and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,382,127 to Garric et al. (hereinafter "Garric").

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a method of supplying substrates to a processing tool comprising, among other features, providing a carrier handler having an end effector "adapted to contact a substrate carrier and disengage the substrate carrier from the substrate carrier transport device while the substrate carrier is in motion and being transported by the substrate carrier transport device". The Applicants submit that Garric does not disclose an end effector adapted disengage a substrate carrier from a substrate carrier transport device while the substrate carrier is in motion and being transported by the substrate carrier transport device. Instead, Garric appears to disclose a lever that pushes a container 100 from a conveyor 401 toward an IN section rest zone of an interface apparatus 200. As the container arrives at the IN section rest zone, the container is gripped by a pair of controlled clamping actuator devices. See e.g., col. 22, ll. 35-45. Accordingly, claim 1, along with claims 2, 5, and 6 which depend there from, are submitted as patentable over the cited reference and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 8 has been amended similarly to claim 1 and to recite a substrate loading station comprising, among other features, a carrier handler "adapted to transport substrate carriers between the substrate carrier transport device and the

first plurality of load ports." Garric does not disclose a single device which is adapted to transport substrate carriers between a substrate carrier transport device and a plurality of load ports. As detailed above, Garric only appears to disclose that both a lever and a gripping device move a container from a conveyor to an interface apparatus. As such, claim 8 is submitted as patentable over Garric and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn. Likewise, claims 9, 10, and 13-15, which depend from claim 8, are submitted as patentable for at least the same reasons.

Furthermore, claim 17 recites an apparatus adapted to supply substrates which comprises, among other features, a controller operative to control the substrate carrier handler such that an "end effector of the substrate carrier handler disengages the substrate carrier from a substrate carrier conveyor while the substrate carrier is in motion." As discussed above, Garric does not disclose this feature. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that Garric does not disclose all the features recited in claim 17 and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 18 recites an apparatus adapted to supply substrates to a processing tool which includes, among other features, a controller operative to control a substrate carrier handler such that an "end effector of the substrate carrier handler disengages the substrate carrier from a substrate carrier conveyor positioned adjacent the substrate carrier handler while the substrate carrier is in motion." As detailed above, Garric does not disclose this feature. As such, Applicants submit that claim 18 is not anticipated by Garric and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 19 and 20 recite a method of transferring a substrate carrier comprising, among other features, employing an end effector of a substrate carrier handler of a substrate loading station to disengage a substrate carrier from a substrate carrier conveyor while the substrate carrier is in motion. As discussed above, *Garric* does not disclose this feature. Thus, these claims are submitted as patentable over *Garric* and the Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action also rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Garric* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,517,304 to *Matsumoto* (hereinafter "*Matsumoto*"). As described above, claim 1, the base claim from which claim 3 depends, is patentable over *Garric*. In addition, *Matsumoto* does not overcome the previously noted shortcomings of *Garric*, namely an end effector adapted to disengage a substrate carrier from a substrate carrier transport device while the substrate carrier is in motion. As such, claim 3 is submitted as patentable over the cited references and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In addition, the Office Action rejected claims 4, 11, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Garric* in view of *Matsumoto* in further view of JP Pub. No. 10-256346 to *Yoji et al.* (hereinafter "*Yoji*"). Regarding claim 4, as discussed above, neither *Garric* nor *Matsumoto*, either singularly or in combination, disclose or suggest all the features recited in claim 1, the base claim from which claim 4 depends. Moreover, *Yoji* does not address the previously noted shortcomings of either *Garric* or *Matsumoto*. Therefore, claim 4 is submitted as patentable over the cited references and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

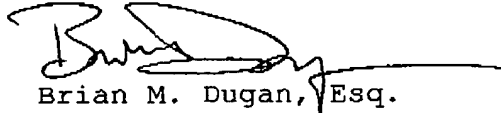
Regarding claims 11 and 12, as discussed above, *Garric* does not disclose all the features recited in claim 8. Likewise, *Marsumoto* does not address the previously noted shortcomings of *Garric*. In a similar fashion, *Yoji* does not appear to address the shortcomings of *Garric* and *Matsumoto*. Thus, claims 11 and 12 are submitted as patentable over the cited references and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action also rejected claims 7 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Garric* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,439,822 to *Kimura* (hereinafter "*Kimura*"). As discussed, above, claims 1 and 8, the base claims from which claims 7 and 16 respectively depend, are patentable over *Garric*. In addition, *Kimura* does not overcome the previously noted shortcomings of *Garric*. Accordingly, claims 7 and 16 are submitted as patentable over *Garric* in view of *Kimura* and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Applicants believe the claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the same. A separate request for extension of time is enclosed herewith. Applicants do not believe any other fees

are due regarding this Amendment. However, if any additional fees are required, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1696.

Respectfully Submitted,



Brian M. Dugan, Esq.
Registration No. 41,720
Dugan & Dugan, PC
Attorneys for Applicants
(914) 332-9081

Dated: November 2, 2006
Tarrytown, New York